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Report of the President of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 1998/48, the Economic and Social Council requested the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), in cooperation with the Board of Trustees, to present a report to the Council at its substantive session of 1999. In the absence of a Director, the Board of Trustees has undertaken the task of fulfilling the request made by the Council and the report of the President of the Board is being submitted herewith (see annex I). Annex II contains a position paper of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW entitled "Revitalizing INSTRAW for the twenty-first century".

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Annex I

Report of the President of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-seventh plenary meeting and by its resolution 1998/48 of 31 July 1998, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations requested that the INSTRAW Director, in cooperation with the Board of Trustees. present a report to the Economic and Social Council at its next substantive session, containing:

(a) A detailed analysis of the reasons for the financial and staffing situation of the Institute and the implications thereof for the Institute, at all levels, including an up-to-date balance sheet of its finances and reserves and all the steps taken to strengthen its financial and staffing situation, in accordance with the relevant articles of the statute of the Institute, including financial administration as contained in the financial rules and regulations of the United Nations, as well as system support;

(b) Information on the progress of the preparation of a strategic and comprehensive work plan and on steps taken for its implementation;

(c) Information on the outcome of the planned inter-agency brainstorming workshop and the planned international dialogue on research priorities.

2. While the Institute is currently without a Director, the Board of Trustees has undertaken the task of fulfilling the request made by the Council in the present report, based on the documents prepared by the former Director in response to resolution 1998/48, which were considered by the INSTRAW Board of Trustees at its nineteenth session (see INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.3; INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.4; and INSTRAW/BT/1999/CRP.4).

II. Analysis of the reasons for the financial and staffing situation of the Institute and the implications thereof

3. Voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund of INSTRAW experienced a first decline in 1991. In 1992, the Institute had the ability to recover the drop experienced in the previous year. However, since 1993 voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund have declined steadily to reach the current acute levels and affecting its ability to meet the scope of performance required by its mandate.

A. Reasons

4. INSTRAW was established as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations, to be funded solely by voluntary contributions at no cost to the regular budget of the United Nations. While its autonomous nature was considered an asset when INSTRAW was established, particularly in terms of the possibility of carrying out research, it has placed the Institute in a vulnerable position in terms of maintaining a sound financial base. Fluctuations in donors' contributions have seriously affected the Institute's financial base, particularly since the 1992–1993 biennium.

5. The proposed merger with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has further reinforced the declining trend in donor contributions. As pointed out by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in its 1997 audit, there was an inordinate delay in deciding on the proposed merger. This in turn had an adverse effect on the ability of INSTRAW to attract and retain qualified staff and achieve satisfactory levels of programme implementation. Thus, a vicious circle has developed: inadequate levels of funding hindered the sustainability of the Institute's operations, resulting in low level of programme implementation, thereby affecting its ability to attract funds and sufficient human resources.

6. INSTRAW has been unable to overcome the negative effects of the vicious circle, in part due to the ambiguity of its autonomous status. While the autonomy of INSTRAW is strictly observed as regards its source of financing (i.e., voluntary contributions to its Trust Fund), the administration of its Trust Fund, authorization for expenditures, recruitment of staff, representational travel etc. must be submitted, cleared and authorized by the corresponding departments of the United Nations Secretariat that provide programme support to INSTRAW as established in article VII of its statute. And yet INSTRAW is unable to access the overall benefits of the United Nations, such as a financial subvention, that might have acted as a buffer against its financial and staffing crisis.

7. Moreover, as indicated in various audit exercises conducted at INSTRAW in 1991, 1996 and 1997, including

an OIOS evaluation, important shortcomings in the level and scope of support services that are due to the Institute from the United Nations Secretariat have affected the overall output of INSTRAW.

B. Implications

8. Due to the deterioration of the financial situation of INSTRAW over the past few years, INSTRAW's already limited budget for the 1998–1999 biennium had to be reduced from $3,837,545 to $2,188,910 (a reduction of more than 42 per cent). This measure imposed the reformulation and reduction of substantive activities programmed for 1999, a freeze in the filling of vacant Professional posts, including those of chiefs of units, and the abolition of eight General Service posts. During the current biennium, INSTRAW's original staffing resources have had to be reduced by over 82 per cent. At present, the Institute does not have the leadership, sufficient staff nor the financial means with which to formulate and implement a programme of work for the forthcoming biennium. The dimensions of the hardship imposed on the Institute by the lack of adequate staffing and financing need to be seriously addressed.

9. Furthermore, during the current biennium, INSTRAW was compelled to close its printing facilities at Santo Domingo, as well as its liaison office in New York. With the financial resources made available by the United Nations Controller in January 1999 and later in June 1999, INSTRAW's management has made provisions to cover the Institute's operations within the limited staffing configuration until 31 December 1999. Detailed information on the latter is contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.3.

C. Steps to strengthen INSTRAW's financial and staffing situation

10. Despite the critical situation which INSTRAW has experienced during the past few years, there are clear calls for the Institute to continue to carry out its mandate for research and training activities, as well as networking and information-sharing, as evidenced in the Beijing Platform for Action (para. 334) and in Council resolutions 1996/39 and 1998/48, and General Assembly resolution 52/95. Accordingly, a number of steps have been taken in order to strengthen INSTRAW's financial and staffing situation, as described below.

Finances

11. During 1998, the President of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees and the INSTRAW Director approached the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, who is also the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to INSTRAW, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women and other senior officials of the Secretariat, and expressed the need to address the financial situation of the Institute. Close communication was also maintained with members of the Institute's Board of Trustees to further strengthen their support for INSTRAW's fund-raising endeavours.

12. The former Director of INSTRAW held separate meetings with members of the European Union, the Group of 77 and China at United Nations Headquarters, and briefed them on the Institute's financial situation. Representatives of the host country were also briefed on several occasions.

13. At its nineteenth session (5–7 May 1999, New York), the INSTRAW Board of Trustees reiterated its trust that member States will reinstate the level of contributions made to the INSTRAW Trust Fund. To improve the financial situation of the Institute, the Board recommended a number of activities, including the establishment of a "Friends of INSTRAW" group and the pursuit of establishing a liaison office in Europe, as well as the reopening of a liaison office in New York in order to increase INSTRAW's visibility and enhance its contact with donors. In addition, the Board recommended that a subvention from the United Nations regular budget be explored. To that end, the Board held preliminary discussions with relevant offices of the Secretariat.

Staffing

14. Notwithstanding INSTRAW's intention to reinstate an adequate level of staffing resources, the Institute cannot report any progress in this area. On the contrary, INSTRAW's staffing situation has become more precarious given its financial constraints. In addition, the post of Director became vacant in March 1999. Due to the uncertainty of the current financial situation, the post has not been filled to date.

15. Seriously concerned with the staffing situation, at its nineteenth session, the Board of Trustees recommended that the post of Director be filled as quickly as possible to provide the necessary leadership within INSTRAW for its revitalization. It also recommended that the Institute continue to operate with current core staff until 31 December 1999 in order to enable it to comply with the requirements of the Council and the General Assembly as well as to

finalize the ongoing programmes. The latter has been already approved.

16. Although limited, the Institute's staff at its headquarters at Santo Domingo constitute a base upon which INSTRAW can rebuild. However, to implement the strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003, the level of human resources of the Institute must be reinforced.

17. More information on the steps to be taken to strengthen INSTRAW's financial and staffing situation is contained in the position paper prepared by INSTRAW's Board of Trustees for the 1999 substantive session of ECOSOC (see annex II).

III. Information on progress in the preparation of a strategic and comprehensive work plan and steps taken for its implementation

A. Progress

18. In accordance with the requirements of Council resolution 1998/48, INSTRAW has completed the preparation of a strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003, which proposes a new vision for INSTRAW and a strategy for its realization. It sets out strategic goals and actions that will:

(a) Sharpen the Institute's programmatic focus;

(b) Increase cooperation with research and training institutes worldwide;

(c) Become a reference point for research and training activities;

(d) Provide a channel for research and training on women/gender issues into the United Nations policy process;

(e) Strengthen outreach and regional representation;

(f) Enable a cost-effective mode of operation.

19. The document outlines a comprehensive work programme for the period 2000–2003 that effectively responds to emerging issues and imperatives for the achievement of gender equality and the advancement of women. It also takes into account the comparative advantages of the Institute's mandate within the United Nations system to conduct research and related training activities.

20. The proposed work programme consists of (a) two broad research subprogrammes on engendering socio-political and socio-economic development; (b) a new training approach based on the development of guidelines rather than full-fledged training materials; (c) the establishment of a global on-line service on gender resources; and (d) a plan for networking, collaboration and partnership. The activities included under these subprogrammes are consistent with the priorities of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996–2001.

B. Steps taken for implementation

21. The strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003 was presented and discussed at an inter-agency brainstorming workshop held in New York on 3 and 4 May 1999.

22. At its nineteenth session, the INSTRAW Board of Trustees discussed and approved the strategic plan and work programme as contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.4.

23. Implementation of the strategic plan and work programme is subject to the infusion of funds into the Institute's Trust Fund to allow for the revitalization of INSTRAW, including the reinstatement of sufficient human resources. Pending increased financial contributions, the Institute will elaborate a programme budget for the 2000–2001 biennium.

Inter-agency brainstorming workshop

24. The inter-agency brainstorming workshop was held on 3 and 4 May 1999 in New York, prior to the nineteenth session of the Board of Trustees. Representatives from INSTRAW and its Board of Trustees, the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) representing all the regional commissions, attended the meeting. Representatives of the Permanent Missions of the Dominican Republic and the United Kingdom to the United Nations were also present. The meeting addressed two main agenda items: emerging trends and challenges for gender equality and conceptual frameworks and work strategies of different United Nations agencies responding to these emerging trends.

25. INSTRAW presented a discussion paper on emerging trends and challenges as well as the strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003, and received valuable inputs from the participants. Special focus was given to INSTRAW's

new approach to research and training, which is based on increased networking and collaboration with academic and research institutions and the creation/maintenance of a global interactive service on gender research and training resources. The discussions, based on presentations by the various participating agencies, highlighted the usefulness of increased networking both for the work of the United Nations and for capacity-building of the local and national research centres that will be part of this network. One important point raised during this meeting related to the need to seek further mechanisms and instruments that will enable linking more effectively the work of the different United Nations entities, especially INSTRAW, in providing research findings to guide policy recommendations, and in turn receiving feedback from the operational agencies on their research and training needs. In addition, some participants pointed out that the newly proposed training approach of INSTRAW was pertinent given that the other United Nations gender-related agencies have established mechanisms as well as the resources to conduct training and capacity-building activities.

International dialogue on research and training priorities in the area of women in development

26. The international dialogue on research and training priorities in the area of women in development that was scheduled to take place on 21 and 22 January 1999 at the Hague, with the support of the Government of Netherlands, was cancelled due to low registration. However, if feasible, INSTRAW will pursue holding such a meeting during the forthcoming biennium.

IV. Concluding remarks

27. INSTRAW trusts that the information contained herein provides the Council with the information requested in its resolution 1998/48. The INSTRAW Board of Trustees is confident that the present report will enable member States to become fully informed on INSTRAW's current situation and will lead towards the reinstatement of former levels of their support for INSTRAW's work. The Board takes this opportunity to reiterate that the financial and political support of all member States is imperative for maintaining the only United Nations entity solely devoted to research and training on the advancement of women, especially at this time when all nations and sectors in the world are committed to address gender equality. On the eve of the five-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action and the special session of the General Assembly on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", there is still much need for research, training and networking for the advancement of women and gender equality; INSTRAW has a crucial and unique role to play in this area.

Annex II

Position paper prepared by the INSTRAW Board of Trustees: Revitalizing INSTRAW for the twenty-first century

I. Introduction

1. Voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund of INSTRAW experienced a first decline in 1991. In 1992, the Institute had the ability to recover the drop experienced in the previous year. However, since 1993, voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund have declined steadily to reach the current acute levels. Without the reinstatement of the financial support of donor countries, the Institute will cease to function by the end of 1999. At its nineteenth session, the Board of Trustees assessed the situation of INSTRAW in the light of changing global conditions and the reform efforts of the United Nations for greater efficiency and coordination of all its programmes. It established a working group consisting of the Bureau of the Board and one representative of INSTRAW staff. A representative of the United Nations Secretariat served as a resource person to the working group. The working group was charged with the task of preparing the present position paper on measures for revitalizing the Institute and securing its sustainability which the Board could present for the consideration of the Council at its substantive session of 1999.

2. The Board considers that closing down INSTRAW when the international community is preparing to assess progress in achieving the objectives set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action would leave an institutional gap in implementation machinery. The role of INSTRAW in promoting research and training on women's situation and development was clearly defined in the Platform for Action. While recognizing the importance for research and training on women and gender issues, the Platform mandated INSTRAW to review its work programme and develop a programme for implementing those aspects of the Platform for Action that fall within its mandate to identify those types of research and research methodologies to be given priority, strengthen national capacities to carry out women's studies and gender research and develop networks of research institutions that can be mobilized for that purpose (para. 334).

3. In compliance with that mandate, INSTRAW proposes to take a two-pronged approach, which involves networking with research institutes around the world, while working closely with the relevant intergovernmental bodies by providing the necessary concepts and data for policy deliberations. This will be accomplished through programming on critical new and emerging issues and through strategic advocacy based on both its own research findings and findings of research conducted elsewhere. For that purpose, greater coordination should be ensured between INSTRAW and the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, other United Nations agencies and programmes, other international and regional intergovernmental organizations, and with other research and training institutes within and outside the system, such as those of the United Nations University and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

4. In order for the Institute to play the role given to it by member States in its statute and in the Platform for Action, INSTRAW must be rapidly and effectively revitalized. The proposed revitalization is based on: (a) a strategy and programme that builds on the Institute's strengths within the context of the changing international agenda, (b) closer collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the intergovernmental process, (c) more proactive and effective linkages with research institutes around the world, (d) streamlined administrative and management procedures in order to increase efficiency and accountability, and (e) the provision of a subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations to cover costs of core staff as a means of insuring INSTRAW's sustainability. Measures to address the immediate and longer-term financial situation of the Institute, however, are essential if this revitalization is to take place.

II. INSTRAW's mandate and comparative advantage

5. INSTRAW was established in 1976 by the Economic and Social Council (resolution 1998 (LX) of 12 May 1976), in conformity with an earlier decision of the General Assembly (resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975). The latter decision was based on a recommendation made by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held at Mexico City in 1975. Article I of the statute of the Institute states that INSTRAW was established in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to serve

as a vehicle at the international level for the purpose of undertaking research and establishing training programmes to contribute to the integration and mobilization of women in development, to raise awareness of women's issues worldwide, and to assist women in meeting new challenges and directions.

6. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing in 1995, set out an ambitious programme of actions to be taken for achieving gender equality. As a result, many United Nations entities have incorporated a gender perspective into their programmes and have carried out research as a subsidiary aspect of their work.

7. INSTRAW, however, differs from the other entities of the United Nations in that research and training on women and gender is its central focus. Its comparative advantage emanates from its mandate, which as stated in its statutes, calls upon INSTRAW to: (a) carry out gender research and training on a systematic basis, (b) synthesize knowledge and information derived from research and develop user-friendly tools for the use of the research and policy-making communities as well as women's organizations, (c) develop methodologies and instruments that will assist in filling emerging research and training gaps on gender issues; and (d) work systematically with research and training communities in channelling knowledge to and from the international forums.

III. Measures to revitalize INSTRAW

8. A number of measures to revitalize and reform INSTRAW will need to be implemented immediately, taking into consideration its above-mentioned comparative advantage within the United Nations system, the current state of research and training within and outside the system, and its institutional and financial vulnerability. These measures are aimed at strengthening INSTRAW's role as a think-tank, a knowledge-based institution on gender issues that will (a) create a knowledge base through its own research and through increased collaboration and exchange of knowledge with the research and training community worldwide, (b) synthesize, categorize and disseminate such knowledge through computer-mediated communication systems, and (c) act as a catalyst of emerging issues that are of relevance to the efforts of the United Nations for achieving gender equality.

A. Becoming a reference point for research and training

9. INSTRAW, as mandated in its statute and reiterated in the Platform for Action, should be able to access, organize and disseminate existing information on gender research and training worldwide. Furthermore, it has the potential to promote dialogue and stimulate research on emerging issues, as well as to conduct research and training in new areas of concern to the international community.

10. In the past, given the limitations in communications technology, INSTRAW ability to do so was limited. All this has changed with the development and rapid expansion of computer-mediated communication technologies. Many research institutes publish institutional information and research findings on-line. With the expansion of computer-mediated communication, the number will continue to increase. INSTRAW will establish and maintain an electronic global service on research and training resources related to women and gender issues. This service will collect, organize and disseminate information for the use of both the United Nations and other organizations working in the field of women, gender and development. It will enable INSTRAW to serve as a think-tank on analysing policy implications of research findings, identifying emerging challenges for gender equality, and promoting and conducting research in new areas.

11. In order to develop this global interactive service on gender research and training, INSTRAW will establish close collaboration with United Nations University and other research and training institutes both within and outside the United Nations system.

B. Serve as a channel for research and training to the United Nations intergovernmental process

12. Given that INSTRAW reports directly to the Economic and Social Council rather than through the Commission on the Status of Women, which is the intergovernmental body specifically concerned with women's advancement and gender equality, its contributions to the international agenda have not been made sufficiently visible and consequently have not reached its main clients, the international community. In order to reverse this situation, the Board of Trustees proposes that INSTRAW strengthen its collaboration and coordination of its activities with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the

Commission on the Status of Women. This would ensure that all relevant intergovernmental structures and offices of the United Nations Secretariat are duly and timely informed on the Institute's work and progress. Furthermore, as INSTRAW strengthens its collaborative partnerships with national research and training institutions, it will be able to effectively bring the results of their research into the United Nations agenda and work.

13. The Institute will also make a concerted effort to coordinate its research with other United Nations bodies and institutions, especially those involved with women and gender issues. It will continue to participate in the Inter-Agency Committee on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE) in order to improve INSTRAW's coordination and collaboration with other United Nations entities, and will increase its visibility and effectiveness within the United Nations system.

C. Sharpening its programmatic focus

14. INSTRAW's proposed research and training activities for 2000–2003 are consistent with the priorities of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women 1996–2001, in which INSTRAW committed itself to research and training on women and poverty, women and the economy, women and armed conflict, women and the media, women in power and decision-making, and women's human rights. However, there are a number of emerging issues where research is necessary to back up policies and programmes for gender equality. Many of these are currently being discussed in the context of preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" by the Commission on the Status of Women, IACWGE and other forums. Also, the inter-agency brainstorming workshop held on 3 and 4 May in New York discussed emerging global trends and challenges for gender equality and identified important areas for research and training, such as women and poverty, changing gender roles and identities and women and governance, among others (see INSTRAW/1999/BT/CRP.4).

15. For the period 2000–2003, as outlined in the INSTRAW strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003 (see INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.4), the Institute will develop further some of the issues pertinent to the medium-term plan and address some of the new thematic issues. INSTRAW will focus on the two areas that respond to the main needs for gender research and derivative training. These include (a) engendering socio-political development and enhancing women's participation; (b) engendering socio-economic development and enhancing women's participation.

Engendering socio-political development and enhancing women's participation

16. The main premise guiding INSTRAW's research area is that women's involvement in urban and rural, national and local politics, as well as their untiring efforts to advance women's causes through the mobilization of civil society, contributes not only to gender equality but also to expanding the boundaries of citizenship, democratization, civil society and political decision-making. In the upcoming biennium, INSTRAW will continue to explore the issues of political participation of women and engendering of the political agenda in different countries/regions and at different levels of governance in order to complement its current research on this issue and formulate a comprehensive set of indicators of political empowerment of women and engendered development. By so doing, it also aims to suggest policies that will enable the integration of a gender perspective at different levels of political and social participation and policy-making in different socio-economic, political and cultural conditions.

17. Specific research programmes within this area will address such issues as engendering the political agenda at the local level; women, conflict, and conflict prevention and resolution; and women, human rights and identity politics.

Engendering socio-economic development and enhancing women's participation

18. INSTRAW's research in this area responds to changes in the global economic system. As a multidimensional process of integration and restructuring across borders, globalization holds risks and opportunities for all individuals and social groups. Household incomes and well-being, employment, social insurance programmes and labour migration patterns are all sensitive to changes in economic conditions and economic policies, whether these changes emanate from national or global forces.

19. Specific research programmes will address such issues as women and poverty; social security and household survival strategies; gender impact of the recent Asian crisis; implications of globalization for women in development in the Arab world; and gender dimensions of transition in Central Asia.

D. New training approach

20. No single institution can pretend to meet the training needs in the area of advancement of women. While INSTRAW will continue to provide training on the areas of its expertise upon demand of member States, it will aim to develop training guidelines based on its ongoing research rather than developing fully fledged training materials. It will also strengthen links with gender training institutions so as to be able to maintain an overview of existing training materials and approaches. This will be achieved through the establishment of the proposed global electronic service on gender resources. The information on existing training materials, as well as INSTRAW's training guidelines, will be catalogued so as to provide users with easy reference and access. In addition, the Institute's internship programme will be further strengthened to provide the opportunity for students, particularly those in developing countries, to come to the Institute to work on ongoing programmes and acquire skills in research and training on women, gender and development issues.

E. Strengthening INSTRAW outreach

21. While INSTRAW's outreach and visibility would be increased through increased use of computer-mediated communications and increased involvement in the intergovernmental process, INSTRAW needs to ensure regional presence and representation. This will be done, when resources become available, by:

(a) Re-establishment of the liaison office in New York and in due course the establishment of offices in Europe and elsewhere;

(b) Designation of part-time liaison officers in different countries where INSTRAW's presence needs to be enhanced. These could be qualified researchers who would be willing to represent INSTRAW in relevant forums, maintain close relationship with INSTRAW's work, advocate for INSTRAW etc.;

(c) Strengthening of the network of focal points by streamlining the procedure and rules for their designation and collaboration with the Institute;

(d) Creation of a network of "Friends of INSTRAW", composed of eminent women and men as well as experts on gender and women's issues, to rally support for the Institute and promote its work.

F. Strengthening administrative and managerial accountability

22. In view of the administrative and managerial problems that INSTRAW has experienced in the past as identified in various assessments reports (see INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.3) and in the light of the proposal of the Board that INSTRAW strengthen its relationship with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Commission on the Status of Women, the Board proposes that the terms of authority between United Nations Headquarters and the Institute be re-examined to find administrative procedures that, while maintaining accountability of all instances responsible for the management of the Institute, can allow the necessary flexibility for the Institute to carry out its mandate.

G. Addressing the financial crisis

23. The above proposed measures to revitalize INSTRAW will not succeed unless the financial crisis is solved. This means addressing the immediate problem of funding to enable the Institute to prepare a programme budget for 2000–2001 and its longer-term financial stability. Given the vulnerability of the Institute's funding modality, the Board would like the Council to consider recommending that a subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations be provided to INSTRAW for the forthcoming year and whenever necessary to cover the costs of the core professional staff of the Institute, including the post of the Director.

24. The Board would also like to urge member States to reinstate their financial support to the Institute for its programmes, and to consider in due time the establishment of a reserve fund in order to ensure longer-term planning and sustainability of the Institute's operations. In this respect, in addition to participating at the 1999 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, INSTRAW will seek the necessary support to organize and invite Member States and other organizations to a donors' meeting in the remaining part of the year. The purpose of this meeting would be to discuss INSTRAW's revitalization strategy and secure the financial support required for its implementation.

25. In addition to the efforts to increase the contributions to INSTRAW's Trust Fund, the Institute will prepare proposals for earmarked contributions from member States and other funding sources for specific projects. For this purpose, the Institute will identify the means of systematically undertaking fund-raising activities. Efforts

will also be made to increase collaboration arrangements with other United Nations entities for funding of specific research and training programmes that they require.

IV. Concluding remarks

26. The Board is confident that the proposed measures will be given due consideration by the Council, and that member States will reinstate their political and financial support to revitalize INSTRAW.

27. The Board would like to suggest that the Council request the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations bodies to analyse the viability of the proposed measures to revitalize the Institute and secure its financial sustainability.

28. While the proposed measures contemplate certain institutional reforms, these do not impinge on the Institute's autonomous and independent nature, which the Board maintains are essential for carrying out its mandate for basic research and training.